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Staging Bruno's Scripted Emblems: Anti-Petrarchism and Mannerism in *Love's Labour's Lost*

Roy Eriksen

È cosa veramente, o generosissimo Cavaliere, da basso, bruto e sporco ingegno d'essersi fatto constantemente studioso, ad aver affisso un curioso pensiero circo sopra la bellezza d'un corpo femenile.
It is truly, O most generous Sir, the work of a low, brutish and filthy nature constant to become the admirer, and have attached a devote thought to or around the beauty of a woman's body.[1]

1 Giordano Bruno's anti-Petrarchan address to Sir Philip Sidney in *De gli eroici furori* (1585) must serve as my incipit to the intriguing relationship between Bruno and Shakespeare in *Love's Labour's Lost*. In one important respect the play is a typical Shakespearean comedy in its focus on courtship and an abundant use of witty wordplay, according to John Arthos, one of "the happiest."[2] At the same time, however, Shakespeare works against the conventions of courtship by avoiding customary closure and the establishment of a comic society. It is also one of three plays for which we have no definite sources – the others being *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest.*

2 More importantly, however, *Love's Labour's Lost* also strikes a note of high seriousness, by posing basic questions about truth and love, topics that indeed would seem to compromise any attempt at construing a finale of comic merriment. In spite of the play's surprising toned-down conclusion, where a possible round of marriages is postponed for a year, I would still argue against emphasizing too much its "apartness", and rather draw attention to the fact that the play, in the manner of *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*, owes a lot to the Elizabethan aristocratic sonnet culture. For the characters in *Love's Labour's Lost*, too, "understand one another in terms of sonnet conceits and postures, Petrarchan and anti-Petrarchan."[3] I therefore propose

that in addition to a general engagement with the courtly game of sonnet writing associated especially with Sir Philip Sidney and his circle, the play draws more specifically on the particular brand of Petrarchism and poetic emblematics that Giordano Bruno propagated to London's cultural elite in 1583-85.[4] The work that especially bears on Shakespeare's critique of Petrarchan courtship conventions is first and foremost the avant-garde dialogue *De gli eroici furori*, published in London in 1585, from which Shakespeare lifts the procession and pilgrimage of the heroic lovers. The play also seems to owe something to Bruno's only dramatic work, *Il Candelaio, Commedia* (1582),[5] and together these works provide a matrix for the courtship game unraveled in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

3 The poetic ideal of *ut pictura poesis*, including ekphrasis, is a commonplace that underscores the focus on visuality in Elizabethan poetry and *Love's Labour's Lost* shows this influence to a high degree. The increased emphasis on printed visual media on the Continent that followed the publication of Andrea Alciati's seminal *Emblematum liber* (1531) was no less than remarkable: the explosive rise in the printing and distribution of illustrated books, the circulation first in Europe, then in England, of prints of artworks, buildings, and city prospects in the second half of the sixteenth century contributed to changing age-old conventions of communication also in England, even if the first highly derivative emblem book was not printed until 1586.[6] A new genre that focused on the marriage of illustration and text, it provided topoi, images, and patterns for poets and visual artists to imitate, precisely when artists in accordance with the new mannerist style to a lesser degree imitated nature itself but emulated and tried to outdo the work of other artists. Mannerism has been variously defined but it is essentially "a historical period existing from 1520 to 1620, in Europe, centered in Italy but with a number of foreign manifestations both contemporary and historical, during which a characteristic style emerged."[7] In this context, Robin Raybould writes that the *Emblemata* "was destined to begin a literary revolution, a revolution that in hindsight, with the background and in the context of the times [...] seems to have been almost inevitable."[8] Of course, that revolution was equally strong, if not stronger, in the visual arts. Although many of the emblem books that followed in the wake of Alciati have relatively crude illustrations, they were cherished pattern books, providing topoi or motifs for the arts, being aids to invention. [9] In addition, they enriched the meaning and aesthetic pleasure due to the synaesthetic complementarity of the resulting art works – of which the stage with its speaking and moving pictures constitutes the fullest expression, as is indeed evident in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

4 Although critics have debated the origins of Mannerism as a style and cultural movement,[10] there is great consensus about what constitutes the formal traits of mannerist style in art and literature, although Jean-Pierre Maquerlot writes that is hard to define the style narrowly as "a combinatory order of recurrent schemes,"[11] because "the Mannerist style is even more protean than the Baroque."[12] John Shearman terms it the *stylish style* with an emphasis on elegance, decoration and rejection of emotional excess, but also stresses the preference for indirection and deliberate difficulty. It inverts "the classical [...] relation of form and content," he writes, and " cultivates style at the expense of its expressive function."[13] The style of Torquato Tasso is typical: It was "artificially interwoven more than is normal, and adorned with varied figures suitable for tempering that excessive clarity, such as caesuras, convolutions, hyperbole, irony, displacement."[14] The emphasis on excessively ornamented surfaces and on the parts rather than the whole, entailed repeated changes of focus and less

focus on clarity, naturalness, and pictorial depth. Also, there is a clear tendency to quote or allude to the work of earlier artists and poets. This was done with the aim to create complexity of form and polysemousness.[15] In short, Mannerism is an art of allusion and quotation,[16] depending on the special knowledge of its audiences and their ability to recollect and recognize complexities of form and content. In this respect, *Love's Labour's Lost* exhibits many features of the Italianate style.

5 The many refined conceits in Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere* provided a treasured model for the emblematist, but the multiplication of Petrarchan conceits and stylistic features in the poetry of his Italian and English imitators, eventually triggered a reaction against stylistic excess.[17] As Frances Yates showed in her seminal article on "Giordano Bruno and the Emblematic Tradition,"[18] Bruno and Sidney were among the leading critics of contrived and superficial Petrarchism in the 1580s, and Shakespeare followed suit in *Love's Labour's Lost* (and e.g. *Romeo and Juliet*) by putting the abuses of Petrarchism hilariously on display. Shakespeare did not, however, neglect the more sombre and humane aspects of Bruno the philosopher, the *academico di nulla academia*, who used "*In tristitia hilaris, in hilaritate tristis*" ["In sadness merry, in merriment sad"] for his personal motto.[19]

6 In the play, Berowne is the accomplished verbal artist, who displays his mannerist leanings both in his *sprezzatura*, or careless brilliance, and in the contrived elocution of his speeches, as is clearly signaled already in one of his first speeches:

> Come on then, *I will swear* to study so
> To *know* the thing I am forbid to *know*:
> As thus, to study where I well may dine,
> When to feast expressly am forbid;
> Or study where to meet some *mistress* fine,
> When *mistresses* from common else are hid;
> Or having sworn too hard-a-keeping oath,
> Study to break it and not break my troth.
> If study's gain be thus, and this be so,
> Study *knows* that which yet it doth not *know*.
> *Swear* me to this, and *I will* ne'er say no.
> *Love's Labour's Lost*, I.i.59-69; emphasis mine

In addition to displaying an example of *circulatio* when dwelling on the word "study" five times, Berowne repeats words that form circles within his speech (*I will / swear / know / know / mistress // mistresses / know / know / Swear/ I will*).

7 When speaking about the effect of the "beauty" of the Princess and her ladies-in-waiting on their would-be lovers, Berowne describes the workings of "love," or Cupid, in a manner that summarizes the effects of instability and movement that characterise mannerist compositions, forcing the eye to circulate and shift between unexpected and varied forms:

> As love is *full* of unbefitting strains,
> All wanton as a child, skipping and vain,
> *Formed* by *the eye* and therefore, like *the eye*,
> *Full* of strange shapes, of habits and of *forms*,
> *Varying* in *subjects* as *the eye* doth roll
> To every *varied object* in his glance; ...
> V.ii.734-739; emphasis mine

8 Mannerist art works do precisely baffle and unsettle by drawing the spectator's eye and attention to "strange shapes" and "varying [...] subjects," frequently displaying the serpentine movements of figures (*figure serpentinate*). The surprising turns and changes of identity, behaviour, and shifts in linguistic registers in mannerist drama similarly engage and confuse spectators by begetting "conceit beyond expectation."[20] Verbal coils thus mark Berowne's speech, when a series of word repetitions in sequence produces at the same time dynamic and arresting movements (*full formed / the eye; the eye / full/ forms; varying / subjects / the eye / varied / object).*

9 In 1936 Muriel Bradbrook in *The School of Night* and Frances A. Yates in *A Study of Love's Labour's Lost* related Shakespeare's comedy to Bruno and to ideas at work in Elizabethan intellectual circles in which Bruno moved, but their studies were not received with general approval.[21] Yates, who had been the most daring and detailed investigator of the play in relation to Bruno's policies of religious reform, did not write extensively on the play again, but returned to the issue briefly in her seminal work *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (1964), in which she states that "an entirely new approach to the problem of Bruno and Shakespeare has to be made."[22] She suggests that the answer to the problem may lie in "Shakespeare's profound preoccupation with significant language."[23]

10 It is precisely language, poetic or literary, as well as the visual language of scenic representation that aims to deceive or mask the truth, confusing the relationship between *verba* and *res*, style and meaning, outward show and inner essence, that is under attack in the play, a typical characteristic of mannerist style.[24] The potential and allusiveness of language, together with Shakespeare's reconfiguring of comic form, constitutes the main focus of the present article, even though I acknowledge the element of topicality so evident in Shakespeare's choice of names for his characters,[25] and in the symbolism of the hunting-scene in Act Four.[26] However important, the allusions to contemporary political events and pressing issues can but serve as the backdrop for the negotiations of love in the main plot and should, I propose, not be allowed to obfuscate the emphasis that Shakespeare puts on the theme of individual responsibility and sincerity in the play.

11 *Love's Labour's Lost* is probably the first Shakespeare play to engage consistently with the sonnet phenomenon that had developed in England during the 1580s and 1590s, a vogue that in its superficiality and artifice produced the characteristic mannerist dissociation of the verbal surface from the core, or form from content,[27] turning all into display and play at the expense of meaning and morality. The comedy is designed to appeal especially to the members of a cultural elite familiar with Italian and French literary culture, that had a taste for Neo-Platonist aesthetics and concepts like *discordia concors*, "a principle that Bruno's *De gli eroici furori* played a crucial role of naturalizing among Elizabethan writers."[28] Another of these philosophical concepts is that of the infolding of three qualities into one, famously portrayed in Botticelli's dancing graces in *La Primavera*, in Bruno's discussion of the choice of Paris in *De gli eroici furori* (I.xi. 84-5), or in the intricate plot of *Il Candelaio*, written and produced for a sophisticated Parisian audience. Edgar Wind terms such "trinities" examples of a *trinitas productoria*,[29] a principle that prominently resurfaces at various points and levels in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and whose roots are found in Plato and his translator, Marsilio Ficino.[30]

12 The play has three interwoven plots set out in nine scenes, but I shall only consider the main plot which is a fairly simple one in terms of action: it moves from an initial vow to

study and remain chaste for three years, a pledge Navarre extracts from of his three courtiers, Dumaine, Longaville and Berowne, and it ends with a series of vows elicited from and accepted by the same by the Princess of France and her three ladies-in-waiting. In the action between these pledges we witness the process by which the men first fall in love and then mount a campaign to win the ladies, but are soundly defeated. The male courtship game fails miserably and instead a female discursive space is opened. In Catherine Bates' view, "by relentless deflation, Shakespeare pokes cruel fun at the claim of *amour courtois* to ennoble men through love." The witty and resourceful women win the verbal duels and dictate their own conditions, as it were, which Bates sees as an "injection of seriousness, which puts content back behind the form." This, she claims, may be said to go against "the more playful spirit of the play," [31] but rather than introducing something new and serious into the plot, it makes, I suggest, evident the inherent limitations and potential dangers of pacts the imposed by patriarchy.

13 Shakespeare adds dramatic prominence to the ill-advised pledge of academic celibacy by drawing attention to the ultimate compact play, *Doctor Faustus*, at the very opening of the comedy, warning us that the pact is doomed to fail. When trying to wriggle out of his oath, Browne queries the King: "By yea and nay, sir, then I swore in jest. / What is the end of study, let me know?" (I.i.54-55). The obvious answer would be that the end of study is truth or wisdom, but as in the case of Faustus, Berowne seeks forbidden knowledge: "I will swear to study so / To know the thing I am forbid to know"(I.i.59-60). However his intent "to meet some mistress fine" belongs to quite another category of forbidden knowledge, one that is more related to the games of deception that follow and where Shakespeare activates a line of action fetched from *De gli eroici furori*.

14 While the witty reference to *Doctor Faustus* is well-known, critics have missed the fact that Marlowe's line is lifted from Bruno's attack on academic pedants, i.e. men like Navarre, Dumaine, and Longaville; for when Faustus wishes to "live and die in Aristotle's works" and is ""ravished by "sweet *Analytics*" (I.i.5; 6), he is translating directly from Bruno's dialogue: "*Quegli che vogliono vivere e morire per Aristotile, e non sanno i titoli de' libri d'Aristotile*" ["those who desire to live and die for Aristotle, and do not even know the titles of his books]."[32] As I shall argue in the following, it is no coincidence that it is Berowne, whose name echoes that of the philosopher, who alludes to the fatal compact of Marlowe's magus.

15 The resolve of Navarre and his courtiers to honour their pledge crumbles as soon as a delegation headed by the Princess of France arrives unexpectedly on a diplomatic mission (II.i). The meeting between the King and his lords and the Princess and her ladies completely dissolves their resolve to study and to avoid female company. Instead the men all fall in love and secretly begin composing sonnets in praise of their chosen ladies, rehearsing well-worn and exaggerated Petrarchan conceits. At the same time it is clear that the Princess, Katherine, Maria, and Rosaline are all romantically interested in the King and his three courtiers (II.i.5-6; 77-79). The epistolary love poems the men produce are examples of "naked emblems", i.e. poems without visual illustrations, based on well-worn conceits used by continental emblematists. It is fair to say Shakespeare develops his own type of "performed" or "moving emblems" in rivalry with the combination of picture and subscription in an emblem, entering indirectly as it were into a *paragone* between theatrical performance and printed emblem. The series of poetic letters performed by Navarre, Dumaine, and Longaville, therefore could be said to function as an enacted emblem book, seen and overheard by their fellows who

lie in hiding, as well as the spectators. In the manner that emblem follows emblem in consecutive pages in an emblem book, Navarre, Dumaine, and Longaville at equal intervals march onto the stage and recite their "inscriptions" based on well-known Petrarchan conceits (Navarre focusing on the lady's eyebeams and the lover's tears, Longaville on the fickleness of love pledges, while Dumaine dwells on the conventional image of the rose). Together the performances form, as it were, a sonnet "sequence" *per se*, or a paradramatic inset.

16 In this, Shakespeare's characters display the emblematic mode seen in the poetry of Bruno and Sidney in the 1580s.[33] One by one, the King, Dumaine and Longaville recite and perform their creations unaware of the fact that they are watched and overheard by Berowne who in the end steps into the open to castigate his fellows, assuming the role of an anti-Petrarchan chider – "Tush, none but minstrels like of sonneting!"(IV.iii. 150):

> O, what a scene of foolery have I seen,
> Of sighs, of groans, of sorrow, and of teen!
> O me, with what strict patience have I sat,
> To see a king transformed to a gnat!
> To see great Hercules whipping a gig,
> And profound Solomon to tune a gig, ...
> IV.iii.155-160

17 Hypocritically he assumes the *sprezzatura* attitude of a mannerist courtier and hides his real self: being in the words of Cyrus Hoy about such a character in general, "cool, poised, utterly self-absorbed – though in fact, of course, never so self-absorbed that [he] does not have an eye ready to detect any betrayal of intention or motive in others."[34] Shortly before Costard exposes that Berowne, too, is a perjurer, the latter gloats over his companions' perjury:

> When shall you see me write a thing in rhyme?
> Or groan for Joan? Or spend a minute's time
> In pruning me? When shall you hear that I
> Will praise a hand, a foot, a face, an eye,
> A gait, a state, a brow, a breast, a waist,
> A leg, a limb ...
> IV.iii.173-178

The attack brings us back to Bruno's dedication to Sidney in *De gli eroici furori*, where he similarly denounces the writers on vulgar love who go mad about the bodily attractions of women and enumerate these in detail in the manner witnessed in Berowne's speech:

> Per quegli occhi, per quelle guance, per quel busto, per quell bianco, per quel vermiglio, per quella lingua, per quel dente, per quel labro, quel crine, quella veste.
> [For those eyes, for those cheeks, for that bosom, for that white, for that crimson, for that tongue, for that tooth, for that lip, for that hair, for that dress.]
> "Argomento", p. 4-5

18 The parts of a woman's body and her accoutrements are all praised, he writes, in "*un fracasso d'insegni, d'imprese, de motti, d'epistole, de sonetti, d'epigrammi, de libri*" ["a clash of devices, emblems, of mottoes, of sonnets, of epigrams, of books"] ("Argomento, p. 4-5). Bruno does not stop there, for in the manner of Shakespeare's Berowne, he uses

theatrical terms like – "*spettacolo*", "*tragicommedia*", "*scena*", "*teatro del mondo*" [spectacle, tragicomedy, theatre of the world] (*Ibid*.) – in his attack on his companions:

> Che spettacolo, (o Dio buono) più vile e ignobile può presentare ad un occhio di terso sentiment, che un uomo cogitabundo, afflitto, tormentato, triste, manincoso, per dovenir or freddo, or caldo, or fervente, or pallido ... (*Ibid*.)
> [Good God! What more vile and ignoble sight [i.e. spectacle; *my addition*] can present itself to a clear-sighted eye than a man, brooding, afflicted, tormented, sorry, melancholy, who waxes now cold, now hot, now boiling, now trembling, now pale]

This is the kind of man, he continues, who "distils the elixir of his brain towards putting into thoughts and writ and etching on public documents those endless tortures, those grave agonies" ("*destillando l'elixir del cervello con mettere in concetto, scritto e sigillar in publichi monumenti quelle continue torture, que' gravi tormenti*", *ibid*.). In Bruno's opinion this constitutes a "*scena*" ("Argomento", p. 3) characterized by imbecility, stupidity, and lewd filthiness ("*imbecille, stolta, e sozza sporcaria*"), constituting in Berowne's words "a scene of foolery".

19 However, when he, too, in the end is exposed as a deceiver and oath-breaker, he surprises all by confessing his love for Rosaline in exalted Petrarchan terms, causing the baffled Navarre to ask "What zeal, what *fury* hath inspired thee now?" (*Love's Labour's Lost*, IV.iii.220, my emphasis), implicitly suggesting that Berowne is in the grip of heroic fury, or Brunian *furore amoroso*. His extended description of Rosaline's blackness will confirm this:

> Is ebony like her? O word divine!
> A wife of such wood were felicity.
> O, who can give an oath? Where is a book,
> That I may swear beauty doth beauty lack
> If that she learn not of her eye to look?
> No face is fair that is not full so black.
> IV.iii.239-44

20 Bruno repeatedly likens the image of divine beauty and majesty, *l'unica Diana* (i.e. Queen Elizabeth), to Solomon's beautiful black bride in Canticles, who is upright like the palm, savours of the cedar, and whose neck is like ebony.[35] Bruno quotes the Vulgate text repeatedly and informs us that he first had wanted to call his work Cantica. [36] We note that the same imagery crops up in Berowne's praise of Rosaline and in his quibble on the words "foul" (punning on "fowl") and "raven" (79-80),[37] as well as in Dumaine's description of the black-haired Katherine "As upright as the cedar" (81).[38] Shakespeare dwells long on the paradox of light in darkness, drawing attention to a deeper meaning, and he also foregrounds its strangeness: "O paradox! [...] Dark needs no candles now, for dark is light" (IV.iii.252, 267).[39]

21 Navarre is critical of Berowne's praise of Rosaline's heavenly beauty that is such as to blind the onlookers (IV.iii.215-219), for it is the King's own chosen lady, the Princess, who is "a gracious moon" (221) and who therefore possesses all the graces, including majesty. Lord Boyet's appeal to the Princess in the Second Act makes this clear:

> Be now as prodigal of all dear grace
> As Nature was in making graces dear
> When she did starve the general world beside
> And prodigally gave them all to you.
> II.i.9-12

Besides, Navarre himself constitutes the male counterpart to this ideal of perfect female sovereignty, being – in Boyet's words – "the sole inheritor/ Of all perfections that a man may owe" (II.i.5-6). Such distinction in Navarre's view only belongs to royals and he therefore reminds Berowne in the later scene that Rosaline merely is a lady-in-waiting, an "attending star" (222) on his love. Berowne passionately replies that eminent qualities are infolded in Rosaline, too, because "in her fair cheek, / [...] several worthies make one dignity" (226-227), being suggestive of yet another reference to *trinitas productoria*, that was so central to the cult of the universality of Queen Elizabeth. A good of example of such intellectual play in England is Bruno's interpretation of the Judgement of Paris in *De gli eroici furori* (II.v.184-85), a topic already seen in the works of Lyly, Peele, and Sabie, and illustrated in the Windsor Castle portrait of *Elizabeth I and the Three Goddesses* (1569).[40] In these works, the golden apple is presented to the Queen, not Venus, as in the classical myth, the implication being that Elizabeth embodied in her person the wisdom, chastity, and beauty of the three goddesses; i.e. the contest between Pallas, Diana, and Venus "produces" the trinary perfection of Elizabeth.[41] At court it was an integral part of chivalrous tournaments, masques and elaborate courtship games imbued with "the dialectical language of Neoplatonism" in the decades before Bruno launched his politico-religious campaign.[42] Levenson argues that "at the highest reaches of Elizabethan social life, courtly love had become a complex mode of play,"[43] so that Bruno's repeated compliments in *De gli eroici furori* to Elizabeth as a perfect prince exploits this cultural and cultic ambience.

22 As an exponent and theorist of literary Mannerism, Bruno combines genres and forms in a truly innovative manner.[44] In *De gli eroici furori,* he breaks the established emblem book formula producing an innovatory moral dialogue that is also "illustrated" by scripted or "naked emblems" with *inscriptiones* and sonnet *subscriptiones* with commentaries. Instead he relies on or alludes to already well-known emblems, which he expects his implied readers to fetch from memory, or recreate visually in their imagination, but for which he provides new interpretations. The innovatory work appears when England had not yet seen the first publication of the type. Samuel Daniel published his translation of Paolo Giovio's *Imprese*[45] – also without illustrations – in the very same year (1585),[46] and before Geffrey Whitney in 1586 had his highly derivative, but illustrated, *A Choice of Emblems* printed at Leyden.[47] As an exponent and theorist of literary Mannerism Bruno combines genres and forms in a truly innovative manner. The missing visual emblems thus are virtual illustrations, used as vehicles for his quest for truth and beauty, and as such were available to Shakespeare. Rosalie Colie comments on this playful working out and presentation of ideas and stresses that " Bruno delights by establishing literary *topoi* as steps to his teaching [...] abstract[ing] literature as he does so many elements of his thoughts, into its signs and symbolic values."[48] I would like to stress that this also true in the case in his prominent use of visuality and mnemonics. He underscores that the frenzies (*furori*) described are not examples of forgetfulness, but of memory ("*non son oblío, ma una memoria*"), and a " desire for beauty and goodness" (I.iii.82-83). Additionally, *De gli eroici furori* is the best

example of what I term Bruno's combinatory and dynamic "rotational aesthetic,"[49] realised in individual poems as well as in the combined totality of parts in that work.[50]

23 Bruno partly shapes the quest for heroic love and knowledge as a pilgrimage and a quest. At the centre of his work, we find a procession conducted by a militia of lovers who carry banners with the said scripted emblems, marking different stages in their education to become worthy lovers. This matches almost exactly what happens in *Love's Labour's Lost*, with the exception that Shakespeare's lovers do not bring on stage physical illustrations. The epistolary love poems are themselves "naked emblems" or scripted emblems, but become visual in performance. Shakespeare develops his own "moving emblems" in rivalry with the emblem book proper, where the lovers come to embody and act out the *subscriptiones*. The result is a contest between new genres, where Shakespeare's art outshines both emblem books and court entertainments. Interestingly, "some strange pastime" or more of the same, is what Navarre and the courtiers choose to devise when they agree to launch a campaign of courtship to conquer their loves after first having been exposed:

> LONGAVILLE. Now to plain dealing. Lay these glozes by.
> Shall we resolve to woo these girls of France?
> IV.iii.339-340
> BEROWNE. We will with some strange pastime solace them,
> Such as the shortness of the time can shape;
> For revels, dances, masques and merry hours
> Forerun fair Love, strewing her way with flowers.
> IV.iii.346-349

Like the *furiosi*, they too become warriors, "*una milizia*," marching under the banners of love; in Berowne's words, they are "affection's men-at-arms" (IV.iii.281):

> KING. Saint Cupid, then! And, soldiers, to the field!
> BEROWNE. Advance your standards, and upon them, lords!
> IV.iii.335-336

24 This campaign, exclusively male in character and scope, will fail gloriously because its message does not take into account the mind-set nor consider the feelings of the women they are courting. John R. Mulryne argues that "the nature of the service proffered by the King of Navarre and his servants is misinterpreted as a 'game' by the Princess of France and her ladies,"[51] but how could they interpret it differently? It backfires because of its one-sided maleness and focus on conquest, rather than on mutual and shared love, and its vehicle, the ornamented language of artificial courtship, does not constitute a suitable and expedient means for establishing relationships based on sincerity. Having been forewarned about the men's courtship, the ladies scathingly and wittily rebuff the allegorical language of their suitors, when they stage the play's second paradramatic inset, the masque of Muscovites and Blackamoors (V.ii.157-264), the first being the play-within-the-play of Navarre, Longaville, and Dumaine as sonnet lovers (IV.iii.16-142), who are overheard by Berowne.

25 Without going into details about the women's mastery of stichomythia, one cannot avoid noticing that the Muscovites closely echo Bruno's description of the heroic lovers' strenuous pilgrimage in the final dialogue of *De gli eroici furori*. After having sailed all oceans,[52] crossed every rivers, climbed every mountains, and traversed every plain plains" ("*varcati tutti mari, passati tutti fiumi, superati tutti monti, discorse tutte*

pianure", II.v.340-41) in order to reach the island of Britain, Bruno's lovers are received by the nymphs of the grassy banks of the Thames ("*leggiadre Ninfe, ch'a l'erbose sponde / Del Tamesi gentil fate soggiorno*" ["gracious Nymphs, who make your gentle stay / Along the grassy banks of the Thames"], II.v.346-47). Navarre and his party claim to have made a similar "weary" journey asking Boyet to tell the Princess that they "have measured many miles / To tread a measure with her on this grass" (V.ii.184-185); but their plea is rejected, because the women obviously feel that they "are inept role-players, puffed up with [...] narcissistic desire."[53] The women therefore refuse to drop their masks and allow even "one change" (209), whereas Bruno's nine *furiosi*, who worship the face of the goddess whose majesty combines high wisdom, noble chastity, and beauty ("*alta sagezza e nobil castità giunte a bellezza*" ["rare sagacity / With beauty joined, and noble chastity"], II.v.344-45), join the nymphs in a circular dance, i.e., they are engaging in a "change." This trinity of qualities is also the culminating example of infolding in the work.

26 In *Love's Labour's Lost* the third paradramatic inclusion in the young men's campaign of courtship, the inset pageant of the Nine Worthies (V.ii.538-699), may also have been inspired by Bruno's predilection for the principle of infolding, but this time there is also a distinct possibility that the plotting in Bruno's erudite comedy *Il Candelaio* may have provided a template. When we consider that the Worthies pageant originally was to be performed by three characters each playing three roles, Bruno's description of his three main comic characters, Bonifacio, Bartolomeo, and Manfurio, in the comes to mind:

> to see the subjects clearly in the complex weave of the plot, let us characterize them as: the insipid lover, the sordid miser, the stupid pedant, and note that the insipid one is not without stupidity and sordidity, nor the sordid one without insipidity and stupidity, and that the stupid one is less sordid and insipid than the stupid.[54]

27 The fact that each character possesses three qualities that vary in degree, so that the trio together exhibit nine qualities, provides a suggestive template for Shakespeare's Worthies as presented by Costard at V.ii.7-8. The Neo-platonic principle of infolding is present at several points in *Love's Labour's Lost*, but its most memorable instance occurs in the characters that are comic versions of the three kinds of life, the contemplative, the active, and the pleasurable, namely Holofernes, Armado, and Costard. They parody "men who have chosen: wisdom, power, and pleasure."[55] The brief dialogue between Berowne and Costard before the Worthies' entry would seem to confirm the consistent play on the principle of three into one:

> COSTARD. O Lord, sir, they would know
> Whether the three Worthies shall come in or no.
> BEROWNE. What, are there but three?
> COSTARD. No, sir, but it is vara fine,
> For every one pursents three.
> BEROWNE. And three times thrice is nine.
> COSTARD. Not so, sir, under correction, sir, I hope it is not so.
> You cannot beg us, sir, I can assure you, sir; we know what we know.
> I hope, sir, three time thrice, sir –
> BEROWNE. Is not nine?
> COSTARD. Under correction, sir, we know whereuntil it doth amount.
> BEROWNE. By Jove, I always took three threes for nine.

V.ii.485-491

The entire comic plot "undoubtedly [is] of Italian descent", Christopher Cairns writes, who sees a general influence in the play, possibly from Ariosto.[56] This is a reasonable assumption, but more specifically the idea to let three characters each impersonate three Worthies, which is a comic version of infolding, the ludicrous version of infolding probably derives from Bruno's deft and witty plotting of *Il Candelaio*. The fact that the pageant fails gloriously is quite another matter.

28 Deception and masking are central elements in the reformation of the precious Petrarchan courtship games of Navarre, Dumaine, Longaville, and Berowne, and give the play the lightness of a *ballet de cour* with inset *commedia dell'arte* intermezzi. The deft handling of plots and dialogue suggests the mannerist style of the mature Giulio Romano, the only Renaissance artist mentioned in Shakespeare's plays or poetry, whose work

> [...] becomes more elegant and elaborate. Polyphonic linear patterns replace the former statuesque solidity. The figural groups become more complex, the compositional rhythms more serpentine, the drawing more detailed, the chiaroscuro more fitful.[57]

29 The Princess and her three ladies constitute the fixed point around which the courtiers move in the last act. They hold the key to a comic resolution of the plot, but do not fully believe in the reformation of the young men. Thanks to their counterplot, the male discursive space established in the little academe of schoolmen in the first scene, is by the final scene completely circumscribed. Still, the Princess is no tyrant and openly concedes that their victory was made possible due to the suitors' "gentleness":

> [I entreat] that you vouchsafe
> In your rich wisdom to excuse or hide
> The liberal opposition of our spirits,
> If over-boldly we have borne ourselves
> In the converse of breath; your gentleness
> Was guilty of it.
> V.ii.705-710

30 She is generous in her verdict, but requires that Navarre and his men be tested and tempered by a trial of twelve months: the men's initial pledge to study and live in celibacy for three years has been wittily contracted into one year, a final example of infolding of three into one. Then, too, the news about the untimely death of the Princess's father, the King of France, allows room for a period of penance, an announcement that moreover is laden with political allusion and topicality.[58]

31 Despite the obvious differences between the journey of the *furiosi* to prove themselves to be worthy and heroic lovers and that of the young men in *Love's Labour's Lost*, the ending of Bruno's dialogue and the play's finale also have some important features in common such as the works' open endings. *De gli eroici furori* moves from a rejection of vain studies and a base desire for the female body to the veneration of the divine majesty embodied in the "*unica Ninfa*"["the unique nymph"] who resides on the banks of the Thames (i.e. Queen Elizabeth) and who is equal to "*Diana tra le ninfe*"["Diana among the nymphs"].[59] Bruno underscores this process of purification and reformation by establishing a unique feminine discursive space. For after nine dialogues between different male speakers, in the tenth and final dialogue the poet gives the final words to

two women, Giulia and Laodomia (II.v.338-39), who serve almost as Beatrice to Dante. A rare case of female discursive space[60] is established when the two women present the author's final vision of love and divine majesty, an obvious compliment to Elizabeth I. Bruno's lovers join the nymphs in the above mentioned dance ("ballando in ruota" ["dancing in a circle"], II.v.354-355] and a song, thus performing the "change" that is denied the suitors in *Love's Labour's Lost*. However, Bruno's work avoids closure, too, because the *canzone* illustrates the principle of *discordia concors* in the contention of Jove and Neptune, the sky and the sea, for supremacy (II.v.354-57). In short, Bruno's ending stresses eternal strife, and it may not be too unreasonable to claim that Shakespeare provides a dramatic version of a similar contrast of opposites, when the allegorical figures of Hiems ("Winter") and Ver ("Spring") conclude the play with the songs of the cuckoo and the owl in a contest that can never be finally settled. In this manner, dialogue and play share a similar open ending, one that is quite in keeping with how Shakespeare in the courtship game of *Love's Labour's Lost* quotes and inventively stages Bruno's militia of lovers in *De gli eroici furori*. The play's sequence of comic dramatic insets and use of anti-Petrarchist conceits at the same time "quotes" and transforms the Neo-Platonizing encomiastic strategies in Bruno's innovatory dialogue.

NOTES

1. Giordano Bruno, *On the Heroic Frenzies. A Translation of De Gli Eroici Furori*, by Ingrid D. Rowland, ed. Eugenio Canone, Toronto, Buffalo and London, Toronto University Press, 2013, p. 5.

2. William Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, ed. John Arthos, "Introduction", New York, The New American Library, 1965, xxiii. All quotes from the play are from The New Cambridge Shakespeare edition, ed. William C. Carroll, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

3. Jill L. Levenson, "Introduction," *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. Jill L. Levenson, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 60.

4. See France A. Yates, "The Emblematic Conceit in Giordano Bruno's *De gli eroici furori* and in the Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 6 (1943), 101-121.

5. Gordiano Bruno, *De gli eroici furori*, London, Antonio Baio, 1585 and *Il Candelaio, Commedia*, Paris, Guglielmo Giuliani, 1582.

6. Peter M. Daly, The Emblem in Early Modern Europe: Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem, Ashgate, Farnham, 2014.

7. Andrea C. Castagno, The Early Commedia dell'Arte 1520–1621. The Mannerist Context, New York, Peter Lang, 1994, p. 4.

8. Robin Raybould, *An Introduction to the Symbolic Literature of the Renaissance*, Oxford, Trafford Publishing, 2004, p. 286.

9. Cf. Vicenzo Cartari's Gli imaginini dei dei degli antichi (1533), Barthélémy Aneau's Pictura poesis ut pictura poesis erit (1552), and Cesare Ripa's Iconologia (1593). For Shakespeare's use of Barthélémy Aneau's emblem "Matrimonii Typus", see my "Shakespeare on Divine Love: 'The Phoenix and th Turtle (1601)'", Cahiers Élisabéthains 83 (Spring, 2013), 23-30.

10. See Castagno's illuminating survey of the chief "historical approaches" to rise of Mannerism and its causes, *The Early Commedia Dell'Arte*, p. 4-14.

11. Jean-Pierre Maquerlot, *Shakespeare and the mannerist Tradition. A reading of five problem plays*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 19.

12. *Ibid*.

13. John Shearman, *Mannerism. Style and Civilization*, Harmondsworth, Penguin,1967, p. 169.

14. John Shearman translates part of Lorenzo Giacomini Malespini's funeral oration on the mannerist poet in *Mannerism. Style and Civilization,* p. 161.

15. Diane Bodart, *Renaissance and Mannerism*, New York, Sterling Publishing, 2008, writes that "Nature was not merely portrayed, it had to be imitated, shown as it should be (and not necessarily as it actually was)", p. 101.

16. Mannerist painters "consistently borrowed images taken from High Renaissance and atique works of art, but that, like a metaphor, the meaning of the chosen exemplars was wrenched from its original context in the process of translation" (Craig Hugh Smith, *Readings in Italian Mannerism*, ed. Liana Girolami Cheney, Peter Lang, New York, 1997, p. xxviii). Smith summarizes the argument of Sidney Freedberg, "Obervations on the Paintng of the Maniera," *Art Bulletin* 47(1965), 187-197.

17. The brand of anti-Petrarchism we encounter in Bruno's "Argomento" is related to that of Domenico di Giovanni, Il Burchiello (1404-1448), Francesco Berni (1498-1535), and Pietro Aretino (1492-1556), whom Bruno also quotes at I.i.44.

18. Yates, *op. cit*., p. 101-121.

19. From the frontispiece of *Il Candelaio*, *op.cit*.

20. Samuel Daniel, *A Defense of Ryme*, London, 1603, p. 15.

21. Muriel Bradbrook, *The School of Night*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1936, and Frances A. Yates, *A Study of* Love's Labour's Lost, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1936.

22. Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, London, Kegan Paul, 1964, p. 357.

23. Yates, "The Emblematic Conceit," *op. cit*., p. 112.

24. See Shearman, *op. cit.*, p. 163-164, and Castagno who notes that in Rosso "there is no depth through perspective" and how in relation to Parmigianino the "quintessentially Mannerist spirit–form, style, and effect (*effetto maraviglioso*) superseded content" (*op. cit.*, p. 21, 33).

25. Duc de Biron (Berowne) and Duc de Longueville (Longaville) fought alongside the Protestant Henri of Navarre (supported by England), the Duc de Mayenne (Dumaine) was the Guise leader of the Catholic Holy League (supported by Spain) (see H.R. Woudhuysen, "Introduction," in *Love's Labour's Lost*, The Arden Shakespeare, 1998, p. 68).

26. On the topic of self-sovereignty and Bruno, see Gilberto Sacerdoti, "Self-sovereignty and Religion in *Love's Labour's Lost*," in ed. Laura Tosi and Shaul Bassi, *Visions of Venice in Shakespeare*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011, p. 83-104. Sacredoti relates the play to *Lo Spaccio della bestia trionfante*, London, 1584, interpreting the hunting scene as nothing but "an emblem [...] which represents on the stage a model of arch-self-sovereignty," p. 93.

27. Shearman points to "the inversion of the classical [...] relation of form and content" in mannerist art works and "the tendency to use language that adds ornament rather than carrying sense" (*op. cit.*, p. 163, 164)

28. Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969, p. 225-226.

29. *Ibid*, p. 120f.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 242-44.

31. Catherine Bates, "Love and Courtship," in ed. Alexander Leggatt, *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 102-122 (111).

32. Giordano Bruno, *La cena de le ceneri* (London, 1584), in ed. Giovanni Gentile, *Opere italiane*, 2 vols, Bari, Laterza, 1925-1927, I.34. Cf. Roy Eriksen, *The Forme of Faustus Fortunes. A Study of the Tragedie of Doctor Faustus (1616)*, Atlantic Highlands, Conn., and Oslo, Humanities and Solum, 1987, p. 59-105 (75). Marlowe's play is cited from eds. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1993.

33. Yates, "The Emblematic Conceit", *op. cit*., p. 115.

34. Cyrus Hoy, "Jacobean Tragedy and the Mannerist Style", *Shakespeare Survey* 26 (1973), 49-67 (56).

35. He also discusses beauty in painting in relation to obscurity and light at II.i. 214-215.

36. Bruno, *Eroici furori*, *op. cit*., p. 8-9. In Canticles, Solomon's bride is described be both as black and upright, savouring of the cedar of Lebanon: "*Nigra* sum sed *formosa* filiae Hierusalem/ Sicut tabernacula Cedar sicut pelles Salomonis (1.4) ["I am *blacke* [...] but *comelie*, as the fruits of Kedar, & as the curtines of Salomón"] (*Canticum canticorum*, in *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, ed. Roger Gryson et al., Nördlingen, C.H. Beck, 2003, p. 997-1002 [my emphasis]). I quote the English text of *The Geneva Bible*. A facsimile of the 1560 edition, Madison, Milwaukee, and London, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969, ed. Lloyd E. Berry. In the context of Bruno's prominent use of Canticles Berowne's phrase "To see [...] profound Solomon to tune a jig" (IV.iii.159-163, 160, 165) would appear to allude to this symbolism.

37. In Canticles the bride is repeatedly compares to a dove or turtle (4:1; 281recto), whereas it is Solomon who is said to have raven black hair (5:11, 281verso).

38. The mention of the cedar immediately bring to mind the central image of the cedar in Canticles, where the bride is likened both to a palm tree and a tower, and said to have garments that savour like the fruit of the cedar (4:11, 281verso), whereas the bridegroom is directly compared to the cedar (5:15; 281verso).

39. See Camilla Caporicci's discussion elsewhere in this publication, "Lady Rosaline's Darkness: Linguistic Games and Deep Meanings", in Laetitia Sansonetti, Yan Brailowsky, Sophie Chiari, Line Cottegnies, Anne-Valérie Dulac, Denis Lagae-Devoldere, Sophie Lemercier-Goddard, Anne-Marie Miller-Blaise, Ladan Niayesh and Michèle Vignaux, eds., *Nouvelles Lectures de* Love's Labour's Lost, *Publications de la Société Française Shakespeare* 32, 2015, http://shakespeare.revues.org/2911, accessed 1 September 2015. We are also reminded that Marlowe alludes to the same symbolism when describing Tamburlaine's reaction to the death of Zenocrate: "Black is the beauty of the brightest day" (*2Tamburlaine*, II.iv.1).

40. Wind, *op. cit*., p. 52.

41. See Bruno's exposition of the myth in *De gli eroici furori* (II.v.xi.184-89), as a comment on Emblem xi ("Pulcheriora detur" ["To the fairest"]).

42. Wind, *op. cit*., p. 74. Wind sees these games as being disinterested, but that would only had been on the surface, because rivaling factions at court where jockeying for power and access to the Queen.

43. Levenson, *op. cit*., p. 54.

44. Maria Rika Maniates argues that *De Vinculis in genere* is the first comprehensive mannerist aesthetic, *Mannerism in Italian Music and Culture*, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1979. For Bruno's treatise, see Albano Biondi, ed., *De vinculi in genere*, Pordenone, Edizione Bibliotheca dell'Immagine, 1986.

45. Paolo Giovio, *Dialogo delle imprese militari et amorose*, Rome, Antonio Barre, 1555.

46. Samuel Daniel, *The Worthy Tract of Paulus Jovius, containing a Discourse of Rare Inventions ... called Imprese, with a Preface* (London, 1585). Daniel worked with the second edition by Girolamo Ruscelli, who contributed an introductory essay on *Imprese* (Venice, Zitelli, 1556).

47. Geffrey Whitney, A Choice of Emblemes and other Devises, for the moste parte gathered out of sundrie writers, Englished and moralised, and divers newly devised, Leyden, Plantin Press, 1586.

48. Rosalie Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica. The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966, p.111.

49. See Roy Eriksen, "Real and Virtual Illustration: Visual Memory and Early Modern Speaking Pictures", *Journal of Illustration Studies* (2013), 1-18 (6).

50. See my analysis of some of his circular poems, *The Forme of Faustus Fortunes*, *op.cit.*, p. 59-102 (esp. 64-81).
51. Muriel C. Bradbrook,"Courtier and Courtesy: Castiglione, Lyly and Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*," in John R. Mulryne and Margareth Shewring, eds., *The Theatre of the English and Italian Renaissance, London*, MacMillan, 1991, p. 161-178 (177).
52. Rowland leaves out the translation of the phrase "vacati tutti mari" (341), which is supplied here.
53. Edward Berry, "Laughing at 'others'", in Leggatt, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 121-138 (130).
54. *The Genius of the Italian Theatre*, edited by Eric Bentley, New York, The New American Library, 1964, p. 199.
55. Wind, op. cit., p. 82.
56. Christopher Cairns, "Ariosto's Comedies and the Italian 'Erasmian' Connection in Shakespeare and Jonson," in J.R. Mulryne and Margareth Shewring, eds., op. cit., p. 113-137 (127).
57. Frederick Hartt, *Giulio Romano*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1958, p. 36-37. Romano is mentioned in the last scene of the *Winter's Tale*, V.ii.95-100.
58. The allusions run deeper and more indirectly in *Love's Labour's Lost* than in Marlowe's and Shakespeare's political plays. For that aspect see Richard Hillman, *Marlowe, Shakespeare, and the Politics of France*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002.
59. We recall that Navarre, thinking the disguised Rosaline is the Princess, addresses her as "bright moon" (i.e. Diana) and her women as "these thy stars" (V.ii.206).
60. For female space and female chastity, see Georgianna Ziegler, "My lady's chamber: Female space, female chastity in Shakespeare", *Textual Practice* 4 n° 1 (Spring, 1990), 73-90.

ABSTRACTS

Among the several works in Italian vernacular that Giordano Bruno surreptitiously printed during his stay in London in1583-85, *De gli eroici furori* is the work that exerted the greatest impact on Elizabethan contemporary poets and dramatists. Ideas and emblems presented in the works of "the mad priest of the sun" (in Robert Greene's phrase) crop up in the plays and poetry of Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, and Andrew Marvell in particular. In *Love's Labour's Lost* Shakespeare seizes on Bruno's extreme anti-Petrarchism and mannerist techniques in his critique of the little academe of courtiers who reject love and break their vows. He playfully reworks Bruno's use of the Neo-Platonist principle of infolding in the moral dialogue, which the philosopher-poet had already successfully adapted in a dramatic form in *Il Candelaio*, one of the best examples of Italian *commedia erudita* (1583). When Shakespeare creates his own version of this critique in a comic setting, he transforms the philosopher-poet's procession of lovers under the influence of heroic frenzy (*furore eroico*) and provides one of the earliest examples of an active use of emblems on the Elizabethan stage. In Shakespeare's unconventional and melancholy comedy, the main butt of this tongue-in-cheek treatment is Giordano Bruno's namesake, Berowne.

Parmi les œuvres de Giordano Bruno qui furent publiées en italien à Londres lors de son séjour entre 1583 et 1585, *De gli eroici furori* est celle qui a le plus profondément influencé les poètes et dramaturges élisabéthains. Les idées et emblèmes présentés dans les textes de « ce fou, prêtre du soleil » (selon l'expression de Robert Greene) se retrouvent dans les pièces et la poésie de

Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare et Andrew Marvell. Dans *Peines d'amour perdues*, l'anti-pétrarquisme de Shakespeare, manifeste dans la critique de l'Académie et de ses gentilshommes ascétiques, n'est pas sans rappeler celui de *De gli eroici furore*. Shakespeare reprend le principe néo-platonicien de l'enchâssement déployé dans le dialogue de Bruno et repris avec succès sous une forme dramatique dans *Il Candelaio*, l'un des meilleurs exemples italiens de *commedia erudita* (1583). Quand Shakespeare reprend cette critique à son compte dans un mode comique, il transforme la procession des amoureux en proie à une fureur héroïque (*furore eroico*), adaptant ainsi la forme emblématique sur la scène élisabéthaine. Dans cette comédie mélancolique qui revisite le genre de la comédie, Berowne, dont le nom fait écho à celui du philosophe et poète italien, est le personnage central de la réécriture ironique de Shakespeare.

INDEX

Keywords: anti-Petrarchanism, Bruno Giordano, courtship, dialogue, emblematics, infolding, Love's Labour's Lost, Mannerism
Mots-clés: anti-pétrarquisme, Bruno Giordano, dialogue, emblèmes, enchâssement, Maniérisme, Peines d'amour perdues, séduction

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